

UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

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Tuesday, October 14, 2025

Straws in the Wind - Part 130

From [Inside Higher Ed](#): ...*The University of Texas system is reviewing all courses on gender identity to "ensure compliance and alignment with applicable law and state and federal guidance, and to make sure any courses that are taught on a U.T. campus are aligned with the direction and priorities of the Board of Regents," according to a statement from the system. The review will be discussed at the Board of Regents meeting in November. System leaders at several public institutions have cited Texas House Bill 229, President Donald Trump's Jan. 20 executive order and a Jan. 30 letter from Gov. Greg Abbott that said, "All Texas agencies must ensure that agency rules, internal policies, employment practices, and other actions comply with the law and the biological reality that there are only two sexes—male and female." Yet no current federal or state laws prohibit public university professors from teaching about transgender identity...*



Hundreds of American colleges and universities are now requiring their faculty to upload syllabi to Simple Syllabus, a third-party platform that offers uniform syllabus templates and easy editing; it also allows faculty to embed syllabi into campus learning management systems. According to the company's website, more than 500 colleges and universities currently use the platform. Institutions may limit who can view the syllabi—for example, Clemson University requires users to log in with university credentials. But other institutions—including the University of Houston, Texas A&M University and the University of Texas at Austin—allow the general public to view their Simple Syllabus pages. This may be in part due to Texas House Bill 2504, a 15-year-old law that requires public institutions to provide publicly accessible syllabi that include major assignments and exams, required or recommended readings, and a general description of lecture or discussion topics...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/curriculum/2025/10/09/texas-systems-review-course-descriptions-syllabi>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:20 AM](#) No comments:

Labels: [politics](#), [Texas A and M](#), [U of Houston](#), [U of Texas](#)

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 74



From the [NY Times](#): As talks between Harvard University and the Trump administration resume on Thursday in Washington over the president's far-reaching effort to bring the nation's oldest university to heel, the school's new negotiator, the billionaire Stephen A. Schwarzman, must navigate a fresh challenge over the government's multiplying demands on higher education. Last week, President Trump made a surprise announcement that Harvard and the government were near an agreement that would allow the university to continue to receive billions in research funds. But a day later, his administration sent letters to nine universities that asked campus leaders to embrace a plan that would align the Trump administration's political agenda with preferred access to federal research dollars.

Harvard officials have since discussed internally the possibility of seeking additional assurances from the administration that the university will not be subject to further demands once an agreement has been signed, according to two people briefed on the matter...

Full story at <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/10/09/us/politics/harvard-trump-research-money.html>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:10 AM](#) No comments:

Labels: [Harvard](#), [politics](#)

Monday, October 13, 2025

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- Letter from AAUP to UC Objecting to Trellix
- Judge rules Trump demands of UCLA must be made public
- Faculty are fighting back
- Faculty Lawsuit Demands Public Access to Trump Administration's Settlement Demands on University of California
- Coalition of UC unions condemns Trump's attacks on the UC and the California economy

Remaking the University

- [Liner Note 40. AI's Two Pathways: 2025 Has Discredited Booster Assumptions of 2024 - 10/11/2025](#)
- [Liner Note 39. Attack Theory for Education - 9/28/2025](#)
- [Liner Note 38. The University of California's Charlie Kirk Tribute Act - 9/16/2025](#)

Higher Ed. News & Commentary

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Something Missing?



Last Friday, a message from EVC Hunt was circulated by email. See below. The message apparently responded to a special meeting of the UCLA Legislative Assembly about shared governance in which much unhappiness was expressed by faculty.

There is, however, one problem with the Hunt message: It does not respond to the resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly at that meeting 116-0 (!) which requested a copy of the 28-page letter sent by the feds to UC/UCLA demanding certain policy changes. The letter was leaked to the [LA Times](#), most likely by someone either at UCOP or UCLA or possibly the Regents.

But despite that leaking, the text has not been made available.

Nowhere in the Hunt message is the feds' letter mentioned. EVC Hunt could have said he was going to make it available. He could have said that he was not going to make it available. He said neither. He said nothing about it.

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To: Academic Senate Faculty

Dear Colleagues:

I want to begin by acknowledging something that is plain to all of us: there is meaningful concern among our faculty about the direction of UCLA's leadership, including my own. The recent Academic Senate survey underscored this reality with clarity. I take those results seriously. They are not easy to read, but they are essential to confront directly if we are to move forward together.

I have spent most of my professional life associated with UCLA. This institution is not just where I work — it has been central to my intellectual journey and identity. That is why I care so deeply about how we respond to the moment we are in.

The truth is that UCLA, like all of higher education, is operating in a chaotic and increasingly hostile environment — marked by declining public trust, political encroachment on academic freedom, constrained budgets, and heightened tensions around speech and inclusion. These external forces pose a common threat to our shared mission and to the ideals that have long defined this university. The rest of senior leadership and I have worked hard to manage these overlapping pressures in ways that protect UCLA's core mission and standing as one of the world's leading public research universities, which includes our ongoing engagement with the Academic Senate.

At the same time, I recognize that the pace and style of decision-making have sometimes left colleagues feeling unheard or excluded. If our processes have seemed opaque or insufficiently consultative, we must repair that together. Shared governance is not ornamental — it is the backbone of UCLA's identity, and it must be strengthened, not eroded, during times of turbulence.

Going forward, I am committed to several concrete steps:

•*Enhanced consultation: Working with Senate leadership to develop new, more nimble models for Senate consultation prior to major administrative decisions.*

•*Greater transparency: Developing shared dashboards and regular reports on financial and administrative priorities.*

•*Values in action: Reaffirming UCLA's commitment to academic freedom, inclusion, and the primacy of teaching, research, and service in every decision we make.*

One thing I'm looking forward to most immediately is the launch of our True Bruin Values refresh project. Following a year of surveys and dialogue, we're engaging in an additional year of input, feedback and engagement to collaboratively define our values. You will hear more about this next week.

We will not always agree on every decision, but we share something more powerful than our differences — a deep commitment to UCLA's mission and to the principles that make this university an enduring force for public good. In the face of the challenges ahead, it is in all our best interests to stand together, work collaboratively, and move forward with clarity of purpose and mutual respect.

If we meet this moment together, with candor and courage, we can not only sustain UCLA's excellence but also reaffirm the values that have defined it for generations.

With humility and respect,

Darnell Hunt

Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

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A modest proposal: In the interest of "greater transparency," how about providing a direct response to the Legislative Assembly's resolution?

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*<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/10/update-on-vote.html>;
<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/09/more-addendum.html>;

conference center (282) UC enrollment (280) enrollment (257) UC-San Diego (255) community colleges (236) LAO (224) UC-Irvine (183) fund raising (165) UC-San Francisco (159) UC-Santa Barbara (158) UC-Santa Cruz (156) controller (147) faculty center (144) UC-Riverside (140) ballot propositions (132) CalPERS (122) UC-Merced (114) faculty pay (109) Master Plan (102) Yudof (90) UCRS retirement (62) Faculty Association at UCLA (60) parking (60) privatization (59) CalSTRS (50) UC Berkeley (34) copyright (34) campus climate survey (28) UCRS (22) Michigan Model (18) UC Merced (17) uc funding (16) Regents (14) State Contribution (14) UCOP (14) faculty recruitment (12) UC pay (7) graduate education (6) UC San Diego (5) UC Irvine (3) UCpolitics (3) teaching evaluation (3) UC Santa Cruz (2)

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<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/09/addendum-and-relocation.html>;
<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/09/whereas.html>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:30 AM](#) No comments: 

Labels: [UCLA](#)

Straws in the Wind - Part 129

From [Inside Higher Ed](#): *The Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior College and University Commission has formally adopted updated accreditation standards that eliminate all mention of diversity, equity and inclusion. The Western accreditor began considering such a change last December, following President Trump's re-election, then decided against dropping the language. But in May they launched a review of the DEI standards, temporarily putting them on hold. Following a public comment period, the commission accepted the recommendations of the standards review group to accept the revisions to the 2023 standards, beginning this week...*



Accrediting agencies have been under pressure since Trump issued an executive order in April directing them to end DEI requirements for colleges. Others—including the American Bar Association and the New England Commission of Higher Education—have also suspended or are considering dropping their DEI standards.

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2025/10/08/western-accreditor-officially-drops-dei-standards>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:20 AM](#) No comments: 

Labels: [diversity](#), [politics](#)

Reject

From [Inside Higher Ed](#): *The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has rejected the Trump administration's proposal to sign on to the "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education," which would mandate sweeping changes across campus in exchange for preferential treatment on federal funding. MIT is the first of the nine universities invited to join the compact to publicly reject the proposal, which has ignited fierce pushback from other higher ed leaders, faculty and experts who see the document as a way to strip institutions of their autonomy...*



MIT president Sally Kornbluth announced the move in a Friday morning letter to the campus community, which included a copy of her response to Education Secretary Linda McMahon. Kornbluth highlighted a number of areas the White House had emphasized in the compact, such as focusing on merit, keeping costs low for students and protecting free expression... She also noted that MIT disagreed with a number of the demands in the letter, arguing that it "would restrict freedom of expression and our independence as an institution" and that "the premise of the document is inconsistent" with MIT's belief that funding should be based on merit...

She was one of three presidents, including former leaders of Harvard University and Penn, who offered equivocating answers when asked about hypothetical calls for the genocide of Jews and whether that would violate institutional policies. Kornbluth, who is Jewish, was somewhat more direct with her answers and the only one of the three to keep her job following the hearing...

Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/governance/executive-leadership/2025/10/10/mit-rejects-proposed-federal-compact>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:10 AM](#) No comments: 

Labels: [Harvard](#), [MIT](#), [politics](#), [U of Pennsylvania](#)

Sunday, October 12, 2025

Going Down

From the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education: *...First-generation students, defined here as students whose parents attained a high school diploma as their highest degree, have consistently had lower education expectations compared to those with parents with a bachelor's degree or higher across all years. However, the expectations of both groups have decreased over time (see Figure 2). For first-generation students, in 2002, some 60% of students expected to attain at least a bachelor's degree, compared to about a third (33%) in 2022. Similar declines are evident for students with at least one parent with a bachelor's degree, with 83% wishing to attain a bachelor's degree in 2002, a rate that declined to just over half of respondents (53%) in 2022...*

Full brief at https://www.pellinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/PELL_Educational-Expectations-of-First-Gen-Students_Research-Brief.pdf.

Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 77

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Nothing to See Here

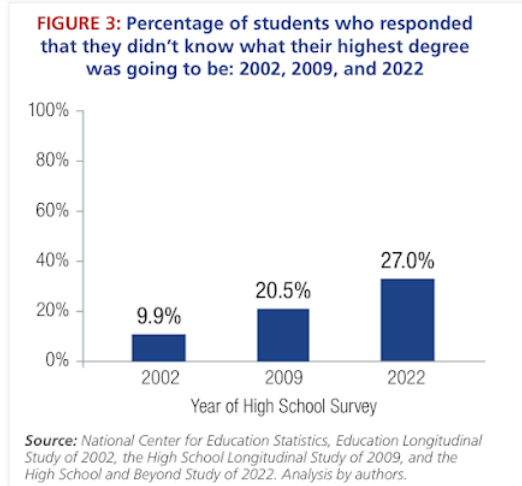
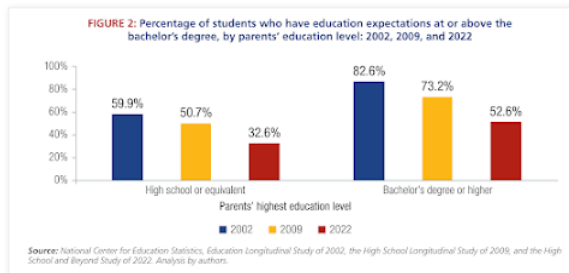
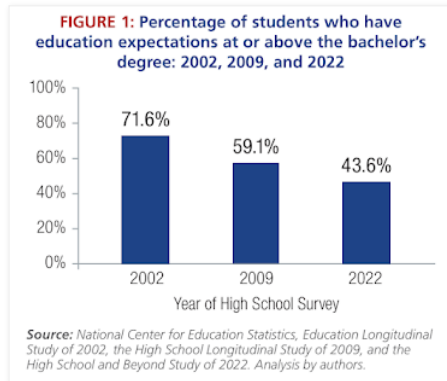
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Will Harvard Continue to Lead the Charge? - Part 69

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Straws in the Wind - Part 118



While schools with low acceptance rates such as UCLA won't be short of applicants, the political impact should not be discounted.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:30 AM](#) No comments:

Labels: [admissions](#), [enrollment](#), [miscellaneous](#)

Straws in the Wind - Part 128

From [Inside Higher Ed](#): Associate professor of psychological studies Sarah Hermann and one of her students at Weber State University were preparing to present their research at the university's 27th annual Unity Conference, the theme of which was "Redacted: Navigating the Complexities of Censorship."

"Everything seemed to be going according to plan," Hermann said. She has spent the past two years studying the impact of Utah's HB 261—a state law that bans diversity, equity and inclusion practices in higher education—on student academic performance and persistence... But on Sept. 29, days before the conference was scheduled to begin, the student received an

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Contributors

- [California Policy Issues](#)
- [Toby Higbie](#)
- [UCLA Faculty Association](#)

email directive from Joel Berrien Jr., director of Weber State's Basic Needs Center: Remove all mentions of "DEI," "diversity," "equity" and "inclusion" from your slides and resubmit them.

"At that point, I said, 'We can't in good conscience present our research without using those terms, and you should remove our presentation instead,'" Herrmann told Inside Higher Ed. "But it was very strange given how close it was to the conference," which was scheduled for Oct. 2 and 3. Other faculty, unwilling to censor their own presentations or to support a censored event, also pulled out of the conference.

Organizers decided to cancel the event on Oct. 1... The irony was not lost on the faculty: The university was censoring its own conference about censorship...



Full story at <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/faculty-issues/academic-freedom/2025/10/08/weber-state-censors-then-cancels-censorship>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:20 AM](#) No comments: 

Labels: [diversity](#), [Weber State U](#)

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